DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 421 780 EA 029 187

AUTHOR Reed, Patricia; Salazar, Marcia
TITLE The Influence of Auxiliary Staff in Elementary School Settings.
PUB DATE 1998-04-00
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Ancillary School Services; Attitudes; Case Studies; Elementary Education; *Food Service; Professional Personnel; *School Culture; *School Secretaries; Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS *Classified Staff; *Custodians; Ohio

ABSTRACT

A case study explored the nature and extent of auxiliary staff's influence on the everyday life of three Ohio elementary schools. An ancillary purpose was to identify factors accounting for these influences and discover the extent that auxiliary staff (secretaries, custodians, and cafeteria workers) perceive themselves and are perceived by professional staff members as influencing elementary school culture. In phase one, a revised version of the Organization Control Questionnaire/Graph (Tannenbaum and Wook, 1979) was administered to 2 principals, 49 teachers, and 12 auxiliary staff from 3 elementary schools, and a control sample of professional and classified staff. The second phase featured interviews with one cafeteria worker, custodian, secretary, and principal from each school (n=3) and seven teachers. Results suggest that auxiliary staff's influence on school culture is both technical and symbolic and is exerted overtly (through persuasion and manipulation of the physical or social environment) and tacitly (through dependency, location, time, and position in the social structure). However, these dual influences do not seem widely recognized by either auxiliary or professional staff. Auxiliary staff see their role as symbolic; teachers see it as technical. Only principals appear to recognize auxiliary staff's dual influence on school culture. Voices of auxiliary staff must be heard. Contains 6 tables and 36 references. (MLH)

The Influence of Auxiliary Staff in Elementary School Settings

Patricia Reed

Marcia Salazar

Bowling Green State University

Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association

San Diego, California

April, 1998

The Influence of Auxiliary Staff in Elementary School Settings

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the nature and extent of influence exercised by auxiliary staff upon the "woof and warp of the fabric of day to day life in schools" (Blase, 1991). An ancillary purpose was to identify factors which may account for the nature and extent of influence exercised by auxiliary staff. Specifically, this study was concerned with investigating the extent to which auxiliary staff perceive themselves and are perceived by members of the professional staff as influencing the culture of elementary schools. The subjects of influence, the nature and extent of influence exercised, the sources of influence, and the motives associated with exercising influence were particular aspects of influence investigated.

Background

Studies of organizational leadership have generally viewed leadership as "a realm of a few people in certain parts of organizations" (Ogawa and Bossert, 1995, p 225). However, as early as 1979, Tannenbaum and Cooke drew attention to the concepts of "total amount of control in organizations" and of leadership as "a function of the distribution of control" (p. 184). Subsequent studies supported the conclusion that power runs up as well as down in organizations (Hickson, Astley, Butler & Wilson,1981) and that "influence is exerted from all quarters, inside and outside the organization" (Hickson, Butler, Cray, Mallory & Wilson, 1986, p. 55). Until recently, however, studies of power and influence in school settings have been rare. As Blase (1991) noted, few empirical studies of school-level politics or influence systems exist. Moreover, those studies which have been conducted have focused primarily on influence relationships between teachers and administrators (Anderson, 1991; Ball, 1987; Blase, 1991; Hargreaves, 1991; Kleine Kracht and Wong, 1991). Almost totally ignored has been the influence of auxiliary school staff. As Hoyle (1986) noted, "the influence of secretaries and caretakers is often discussed in staff rooms [but] evidence for this influence is in short supply" (p.77). And, as recently as 1991, Iannaccone argued there were primarily only three classes of persons to be considered in the polity of the school: "pupils, teachers, and administrators"

(p. 468). He acknowledged that "we know better, there are others too, but for the practical purpose of answering the question, 'why micropolitics?', even this limited view will do" (p. 470). Generally ignored, therefore, has been a significant conclusion of the seminal work by Dahl (1961): "virtually no one, and certainly no group of more than a few individuals, is entirely lacking some influence resources" (p. 228).

As numerous studies have indicated (Greenfield, 1991; Kantner, 1983; Rutter et al.; Sarason, 1971), effective organizations are those that have a strong culture that bonds all constituencies in a common commitment. People in different roles in schools can lead and thereby affect the performance of their schools (Pounder et al., 1995). Thus, ignoring the influence of any segment of the school community overlooks an opportunity to strengthen commitment and improve performance. Moreover, being able to diagnose "the power of other players" helps the formal leader trace possible allies and possible opponents, increase his/her capacity to take action (Pfeffer, 1981, p. 81), and negotiate and predict responses to various initiatives (Salanck and Pfeffer, 1995).

Method and Data Sources

This investigation utilized a case study approach and was conducted in 1997 in a small city school district in Ohio. The district has six elementary schools, one junior high school, and one high school and serves a total of 3,624 students. For purposes of this study, only elementary sites were utilized so that the settings would be relatively comparable. And, since length of tenure within the school may be associated with perceptions of the extent of influence exercised by various school employees, only those three elementary schools in which the principals and most of the auxiliary and professional staff had been employed at their respective school sites for at least five years were included in the study. The study was conducted in two phases, the first of which used a quantitative methodology and the second of which used a qualitative methodology.

Phase One

The initial target population for the first phase of the study consisted of all the eighty-

five auxiliary and professional staff members employed at the three school sites (three principals, sixty-six teachers, nine cafeteria workers, four custodians, three secretaries). The final sample upon which the quantitative data analysis was based included two principals, forty-nine teachers, and twelve auxiliary staff representing a total of sixty-three individuals (74%) who responded to the questionnaire administered in the first phase of the study.

The questionnaire utilized in the first phase was an adaptation of the Organization Control Questionnaire/Graph (OCQG) originally designed by Tannenbaum and Cooke (1979), revised by Adams (1993), and subsequently used in a study reported by Pounder et al. (1995). The revised questionnaire was similar to the one used by Adams but modified to include three new response categories (cafeteria workers, custodians, and one or two individuals teachers) in addition to four response categories from Adams' questionnaire (teachers acting collectively, principals, secretaries, and patrons) and slightly different terminology on the five point Likert-type scale.

The face validity and reliability of the questionnaire were examined prior to its administration in the study. This involved administering the questionnaire to a sample of twenty-three principals, teachers, and auxiliary staff members not involved in the study on two different occasions with an interval of two weeks between each administration. Respondents indicated they had no difficulty in interpreting or responding to the items. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed for the pre- and post-test scores for each item across all twenty-three subjects. As can be noted in Table 1, the Pearson correlation coefficients indicated a moderately high reliability for Item 4 and a moderate or low reliability for all the other items. However, since the Pearson correlation coefficient is affected by the variance within the variables of concern, the moderate to low correlation coefficients could be in part a function of the relatively low standard deviations that characterized the pre- and post-test responses. Therefore, even though the reliability of a number of the items was lower than would have been desirable, since the findings of the quantitative phase were to be regarded only as preliminary findings, the questionnaire was considered adequately valid and reliable for

purposes of the study.

[Insert Table 1 about here.]

The data analysis for this phase of the study involved calculating the composite mean scores for responses to each of the seven items on the questionnaire for each of three groups (principals, teachers, and auxiliary staff), conducting a repeated measures analysis of variance to determine if there were significant differences between ratings of the seven items by each group, and performing multiple analyses of variance to determine if there were significant role, school, or role/school interaction effects.

Phase Two

The target population for the second phase of the study was initially defined as three individuals from each school who held each of the three auxiliary staff positions (cafeteria worker, custodian, secretary), the three individuals in each of the three schools who held the position of principal, and three individuals in each of the three schools who held the position of teacher or a total of twenty-one participants. All respondents to the questionnaire administered in Phase 1 were asked to indicate if they would be willing to be interviewed during the second phase of the study. In instances in which volunteers representing any of these positions in a school exceeded these numbers, participants were chosen randomly. However, because there was an insufficient number of volunteers who held the positions of secretary, principal, and teacher in two of the schools, the snowball technique, whereby participants in a study are used to contact others, was used to secure additional participants.

The initial sample for the second phase of the study was comprised of a total of twenty employees. The sample included three cafeteria workers (one from each school), three custodians (one from each school), three secretaries (one from each school), three principals (one from each school), and eight teachers (three from two schools but only two from the third school). Subsequently, one of the three teachers in one school withdrew from the study for personal reasons so the data collection for that teacher was incomplete. The final sample upon which the data analysis was based was therefore comprised of nineteen subjects; three cafeteria

workers, three custodians, three secretaries, three principals, and seven teachers.

The primary mode of data collection in the second phase of the study involved conducting a series of interviews with the nineteen participants using two semi-structured interview protocols, one for auxiliary staff and another for professional staff. All interviews were conducted at the school sites and in private. Respondents' comments were audio taped and then transcribed verbatim.

Later, a second round of interviews was conducted as a form of member check, that is, "taking data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible" (Merriam, 1988, p. 169). Each of the second interviews began with asking participants if they would like to make any changes in the transcripts of the first interviews that had been mailed to them previously. Changes requested primarily consisted of editorial modifications to eliminate redundant comments or repetition of words; only one participant asked that a number of sentences be deleted. Statements made in the initial interview that had been identified as needing further clarification were also discussed during this second interview. Also, each participants was asked to study an Influence Patterns Chart, a visual aid which synthesized the influence patterns represented in that participant's responses, to verify if they accurately represented the respondent's perceptions of the subjects influenced by cafeteria staff, custodians, and secretaries.

Data collected from the interviews was analyzed deductively using two sub-processes, unitizing and categorizing. In the unitizing process, units of meaning relating to each question were identified and extraneous data removed. Units of meaning were then placed on unit cards, each of which was coded to indicate the question and the role of the respondent. Units of meaning were then grouped and regrouped in terms of emerging commonalities and themes relating to (1) the position of the respondents, (2) the subjects of influence, (3) the nature and extent of influence exercised, (4) the sources of influence, and (5) the motivations associated with exercising influence.

Results

Phase One

Descriptive statistics performed on responses to the questionnaire administered in the first phase of the study indicated that respondents as a whole assigned numerically higher ratings of influence to the principal, followed in decreasing order by teachers collectively, teachers individually, patrons of the school community, the school secretary, the custodian, and the cafeteria staff (see Table 2). A graphic comparison of the mean scores for each of the items for each group of respondents (auxiliary staff, principals, and teachers) is presented in Figure 1.

[Insert Table 2 and Figure 1 about here.]

The mean scores for the three groups were then compared by conducting a repeated measures analysis of variance and applying Tukey's Studentized range test to determine the sources of within factor effects (see Table 3). For auxiliary staff significant differences were found only in comparisons of ratings of the influence of (1) principals with cafeteria staff, (2) teachers collectively with cafeteria staff, and (3) principals with patrons (see Table 4). However, when responses of teachers were analyzed, statistically significant differences were found in comparisons of ratings of the influence of (1) all other groups with both cafeteria staff and custodians, (2) principals and teachers collectively with secretaries, and(3) principals with both teachers individually and patrons(see Table 5). No significant differences were found in the comparisons of principals' ratings of the influence of the various individuals and groups but it should be noted that the sample size (n =2) severely restricted the parameters that govern calculation of the p value (see Table 5).

[Insert Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 about here.]

Multiple analyses of variance were then performed to determine if there were statistically significant differences in respondents' responses to each item in relation to the role of the respondents (auxiliary staff, principal, teacher), school site, or interaction between role and school. Wilks' lambda test of F approximations revealed no significant differences with

respect to role effect ($p > 0.998$), school effect ($p > 0.216$), or school/role effect ($p > 0.431$).

Phase Two

Nature and extent of influence of cafeteria staff. Results of the analysis of the interview data revealed that all but two respondents perceived the cafeteria staff as exercising some influence upon the school culture. One cafeteria worker indicated that he did not believe the cafeteria staff exercised any influence. He explained this by noting that he was not consulted for input on what the cafeteria rules should be or how students ought to conduct themselves during lunch time. One secretary also viewed the cafeteria staff as not exercising any influence. She attributed this lack of influence to the "atmosphere" of her particular school.

Cafeteria staff themselves, as well as other auxiliary staff and professional staff, perceived the primary subjects of the influence of cafeteria staff to be students. However, teachers and one of the principals in two of the schools in which the cafeteria staff were responsible for overseeing the lunchrooms also spoke of the influence cafeteria workers exercised upon teachers and the overall climate of the school, especially during and immediately after the school lunch period.

Cafeteria workers themselves perceived their influence to be primarily symbolic in nature; that is, they saw themselves as role models or surrogate parents for students. One principal also spoke of the symbolic role of cafeteria staff. She indicated that some of the children will take similar jobs when they grow up and thus need good role models. However, most teachers and principals tended to view the influence of cafeteria workers as technical in nature; that is, stemming from their ability or inability to perform specific services.

The cafeteria staff who saw themselves as exercising influence perceived that influence as being positive in nature. One noted that children "learn better on a full stomach." Another compared herself to "the mom and dad" who either discipline or "perk [the children] up" when they look unhappy, especially if they "don't have a kind word at home." Neither custodians or secretaries made any direct reference to either the positive or negative nature of the influence

of cafeteria staff. However, one principal and most of the teachers indicated that cafeteria staff exercised negative influence in that they lacked "the skills to deal with students in a positive way."

Nature and extent of influence of custodians. All but two respondents, a cafeteria staff member and a secretary, indicated that they believed that custodians exercise influence upon the culture of the school. The cafeteria staff member stated that he did not believe that custodians have any influence because they do not have any impact on the decision making process in the school even when matters relate specifically to building maintenance. The secretary said she did not perceive the custodian to be influential but did not elaborate on this remark.

Custodians themselves linked their influence primarily to students. One remarked:

> I don't want you to think that I'm bragging, but a lot of people say we're just as important as what teachers are because we have an influence on kids' lives, too. A lot of times we have more of an influence on the children because sometimes we are around the kids more than their parents actually are because they spend more time here in school than they do in their waking hours at home.

Custodians were perceived by other auxiliary staff as well as principals and teachers as influencing teachers as well as students. One cafeteria worker remarked that the custodian or anyone in the school that "makes an effort of saying something to the children is influential." Another made reference to the importance of the custodian's functions in keeping the school running. One of the secretaries specifically referred to the custodian's influence upon children through being a role model while another linked the custodian's influence primarily to his job duties. All three principals emphasized the influence of custodians upon students but also spoke of their influence as it related to their work in keeping the building functioning. Some teachers also noted custodians' influence upon students but most talked of custodians' influence as it related to their being able to do their work and how that affected the overall climate of the building. One teacher remarked, "They are very influential in setting the mood for the day for teachers. If rooms aren't clean, teachers get upset. They're influential that way."

Like cafeteria workers, custodians perceived their influence to be primarily symbolic.

They saw themselves as role models and surrogate parents for students. As one noted, "The kids look up to you. You can kind of form children, even though you're not doing it educationally - morally." Two of the secretaries spoke of the symbolic influence of the custodian as role models but also pointed to the technical aspects of the custodian's influence : "They need to keep the heat running, they need to make sure the water is going like it's supposed to, the rooms are clean," otherwise "things can go wrong." Principals also spoke of the influence of custodians as being both symbolic and technical. They perceived custodians not only as serving as role models and surrogate parents but, through carrying out their building maintenance functions, facilitating the efficient operation of the school. Some teachers also referred to the symbolic nature of the custodians' influence in in serving as role models for students, promoting a positive climate within the building, and enhancing the community's view of the school. But the majority of the teachers emphasized the importance of the technical influence of custodians as it related to the day to day operations of their classrooms and the school.

Custodians viewed themselves and other auxiliary staff as well as principals and teachers perceived custodians as exercising positive influence upon the culture of the school.

Nature and extent of influence of secretaries. Overall secretaries were perceived by other auxiliary staff, principals, and teachers as having more widespread influence than other members of the auxiliary staff. Cafeteria staff talked of the influence of the secretary as it related to both children and the principal.

> She gets *everything* [for the children] . . . She gives them medication when they are sick, gets them a nurse if they get hurt, gets hold of Mom or Dad if they have a problem . . . They go to the secretary when they forget their homework or their lunch money.

> They're sitting next door to the principal all the time, and if you want something typed, you better be listening to some of the things she's interested in. The principal has to rely on a secretary when they're out of the building sometimes to kind of hold things together. They envision themselves as the right hand of the principal, even though a building may have a teacher in charge. And they [the principals] don't rely on a custodian and a cafeteria worker or something in the same way.

Secretaries, however, regarded themselves as less influential than other auxiliary and professional staff perceived them to be. Secretaries spoke of their influence primarily in

terms of their influence upon students One secretary commented that she had only "some degree of influence."

> I don't work with every child every day. I see children down at the office for various reasons from sickness to going to call parents. If I am busy, I want to make sure I take time with them. You know, I am not their teacher, I am not the principal, and I have other responsibilities. . . . There may be a few teachers I have some influence over, but the majority I don't.

Another said that although she thought she had some influence upon students this influence was "peripheral." She viewed herself as "an auxiliary person" rather than someone with "direct educational influence." This secretary, however, also indicated that she thought she has some influence upon external constituencies in terms of how she answered the phone and thus affected the way the public perceived the school. A third said:

> I try very hard to be positive in contact with parents, especially contact with the students, because I think a lot of students come in and they may not have the best life at home; they may not have the best start in the morning. And the more positive influence that you see, the better the day gets. . . . I hope that if I do have influence on any of the students or any of the staff, it is for the good, it's for them to think into the future, it's for the kids to say, "Yes, I know I need to be in school, I need to hear all the information my teacher wants me to learn, I need to be here to take my tests, I need to be here to get every bit of education I can." . . .So you're a second mom, you're a listener. Kids come in crying upset with things going wrong at home and maybe they won't tell the teacher and they'll come down and spend some time down where they'll sit on the chair and we get talking and they let out the problems at home . . . and [you are] a counselor.

Principals spoke at length about the influence secretaries had both inside and outside the school. They repeatedly used the terms "rely on," "depend on," and "count on" in talking about their secretaries. Examples of principals' comments included:

> I call on her for a lot of decisions because she knows the students; the students respect her. I think the staff respects her. And I have a high regard for her ability to make a decision in my absence. . . . I count on her to be a sounding board. . . . She's highly visible in the school. She is highly interactive with the staff and students.

> I've had to depend on her a lot, and she really helped me ease into the building. . . She can be considered the most influential of the three roles (auxiliary staff] to a greater number of people She is on the front line, more visible than the other classified staff.

> People have no idea of the extent to which a secretary influences the building climate in each and every way. . . . At times she is a babysitter, surrogate mother, school nurse, confidante, encourager, chief diplomat of our building - she is the first person with whom anyone makes contact who calls or drops in. The way she lives her role is vital to

> the public relations in this building. She is probably a more important public relations person than I am or the teachers are. . . . The way she interacts with the children impacts on them greatly. . . And she serves as a role model as a professional in that role for the kids as they come in contact with her. She is also seen as someone who can work comfortably with all kinds of people - staff and community alike - that's another reason why it's a way she affects the building climate and image.

Teachers also spoke of the widespread influence of the secretaries as that influence related to students, staff, administration, parents, and the public. Six of the teachers emphasized their dependency on the secretaries. As one noted, "You couldn't get by without them." Teachers also talked of the multiple roles of the secretary - the secretary takes messages, looks after sick children, handles public relations on the phone, fixes the copy machine when it breaks down, keeps things running when the principal is away, gets bus passes, banks school monies, and handles money for pictures or book orders. One teacher also noted that the secretary establishes the atmosphere of the school office. Another called attention to the secretary's influence upon children: "The children go through school and the secretary is usually one common denominator they have in first, second, third grade . . . The teachers change but the secretary is a constant." Another drew attention to the secretary's gate keeping function:

> I think of the secretary as a kind of gatekeeper, and it's interesting that we just had e-mail put in the building and we were so excited that we would have access to this modern-day type of technology and we were told that even though we had the whole building wired and our telephone system, every call still had to go through the secretary.

Cafeteria staff and custodians tended to view the secretary as one who provided essential services and whose influence was primarily technical in nature. Secretaries perceived their influence as being both symbolic and technical in nature. They saw themselves as serving as role models and surrogate parents for students and promoting a positive image of the school to parents and the larger community as well as providing many essential services for students, teachers, and principals. Principals also perceived the secretaries' influence as being both symbolic and technical. Teachers perceived the influence of secretaries to be primarily technical in nature and stemming primarily from teachers' dependency upon secretaries to

provide and/or allow access to certain essential services.

Overall, secretaries perceived themselves and and were perceived by other auxiliary staff, principals, and teachers as exercising positive influence upon the culture of the school.

Sources of influence. Sources from which auxiliary staff appeared to derive their influence reflected most predominantly in the comments of both auxiliary and professional staff had to do with ecological control, that is, manipulation of the social and/or physical environment of the school. Cafeteria staff referred to their influence as stemming from their skill in manipulating both the physical environment by providing nourishing lunches and the social environment through relating to children. Custodians also linked the influence of cafeteria staff to their skill in manipulating both the physical and social environment. However, secretaries as well as principals and teachers considered the influence of cafeteria staff to be derived primarily from a lack of skill in manipulating the social environment.

Custodians referred to their influence as stemming primarily from their skill in manipulating the social environment particularly as it related to students. Other auxiliary staff and principals perceived custodians' influence to be derived from their skill in manipulating both the social environment through relating to students and staff and the physical environment by performing essential building maintenance functions. However, teachers attributed custodians' influence to primarily to skill in manipulating the physical environment.

Secretaries attributed their influence primarily to their skill in manipulating the social environment as it related to students, staff, and parents. Other members of the auxiliary staff and teachers attributed the influence of secretaries primarily to their skill in manipulating the physical environment through performing various clerical, gate keeping, and office management functions. Secretaries were perceived by principals as deriving their influence from their skill in manipulating both the physical environment and the social environment.

Other sources of influence on the part of auxiliary staff which were reflected in respondents' comments were dependency, persuasion, physical location, time, and position. In discussing the influence of auxiliary staff, auxiliary staff as well as principals and teachers

frequently talked about how they relied or depended upon various members of the auxiliary staff to perform certain functions. However, dependency surfaced most frequently as a source of influence associated with secretaries. It also appeared, but to a lesser extent, in comments pertaining to the influence of custodians. It was not mentioned in any comments relating to the influence of cafeteria staff.

Auxiliary staff also perceived themselves as deriving influence from their ability to use persuasion. Teachers and principals also frequently alluded to the ability (or lack of ability in the case of cafeteria workers) to use persuasion as a source of influence on the part of auxiliary staff.

Although auxiliary staff themselves did not make direct reference to physical location or time as sources of their influence, both of these factors were mentioned frequently in the comments of principals and teachers. It was noted that cafeteria staff were relegated to a peripheral location in the school in which their contacts were primarily with students. Custodians were viewed as being more mobile and thus coming into contact with teachers and principals as well as students Secretaries were viewed as occupying a central location in the school in which their contacts not only included students, teachers, and the principal, but parents and other external constituencies. It was also noted that cafeteria staff's time to influence was limited primarily to the lunch period while custodians' and secretaries' time to influence extended throughout the school day.

Position as a source of influence appeared only in comments of other auxiliary staff and teachers when discussing the influence of secretaries.

Motivations for exercising influence. When asked what motivates them to try to exercise influence within the school, concern for children was cited by all but one member of the auxiliary staff as the source of their motivation to influence others. One secretary said her desire to have a sense of accomplishment served as her source of motivation. While professional staff were not asked to comment specifically on the motivations of auxiliary staff, principals' comments included a number of references to custodians' and secretaries' concern for children.

Teachers' comments, however, included no references to the motivations of auxiliary staff.

Discussion

Auxiliary Staff As Agents of Influence

Results of this study lend support to the conclusion that, although their influence is less than that of the professional staff, auxiliary staff are influential in shaping the school culture. These results are consistent with pluralistic views of influence emanating from the work of Banfield (1961), Dahl (1961), and Polsby, (1969) and the contention that there is a distinction between position authority and influence (Barnard, 1968; Bass, 1960; Katz & Kahn, 1966). The results also lend support to the premise that leadership is exercised at all levels and flows up and down within organizations (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995).

The Dual Role of Auxiliary Staff

Results of this study strongly suggest that efforts to understand the culture of elementary schools must take into consideration the dual role auxiliary staff play in shaping the school culture. It appears that the influence exercised by auxiliary staff is both symbolic and technical in nature. However, the dual nature of the influence of auxiliary staff in shaping the school culture appears not to be widely recognized by either auxiliary or professional staff. Auxiliary staff themselves appear to view their influence as being primarily symbolic in nature. In contrast, teachers appear to view the influence of auxiliary staff as being primarily technical in nature. Only principals appear to recognize the dual role of the auxiliary staff in influencing the culture of the school.

Subjects of Influence

Results of this study imply that, in general, auxiliary staff view themselves as having a very limited realm of influence; they see themselves as exercising considerable influence over students but very little influence over other groups. Professional staff appear to view auxiliary staff as having a broader realm of influence. They see the realm of influence of auxiliary staff as not being limited to students but extending to teachers, and, in the case of secretaries, parents and other external constituencies.

Sources of Influence

In his review of the literature of influence, Cartwright (1965) identified five major sources of influence: physical control, control over gains and costs, control over available information, control by authority, and ecological control (i.e., manipulation of the physical or social environment that shapes the subject of influence). He also drew attention to position in the social structure and persuasion. Three other sources of influence also identified in the literature are dependency, time, and location. Dependency stems from the control that employees have of information, persons, or instrumentalities (Mechanic, 1964) and services (Hartzell et al, 1995). Time has to do with the extent of contact between the agent and the subject (Cartwright, 1965; Curtis, 1948; Mechanic, 1964). Location refers to centrality in the physical space of the organization (Mechanic, 1964; Hickson, Astley et al., 1981).

Results of this study suggest that auxiliary staff derive their influence from six sources: persuasion, ecological control, dependency, time, location, and position in the social structure. Auxiliary staff as well as professional staff cited numerous instances in which auxiliary staff attempted to "persuade" students to act in a manner consistent with their beliefs and norms and values of the school. Secretaries as well as professional staff spoke of secretaries' attempts to promote a positive image of the school by "persuading" parents and the public in general. Auxiliary and professional staff spoke repeatedly of ways in which auxiliary staff were successful or unsuccessful in manipulating the physical or social environment. Auxiliary staff as well as professional staff cited numerous instances which illustrated their dependency upon auxiliary staff to perform certain functions. Time to influence various groups of subjects was alluded to repeatedly in the responses of both auxiliary and professional staff. Numerous allusions were made to the proximity of secretaries to the "heart of the school" in comparison to the more tangential locations of cafeteria staff and custodians. Only in the case of secretaries, however, did position in the social structure surface as a source of influence on the part of auxiliary staff.

Results of this study also suggest that certain sources of influence may be more closely

linked to perceptions of the nature of influence exercised by auxiliary staff and others more closely linked to perceptions of the extent of influence of auxiliary staff. Persuasion and manipulation of the social and physical environment may be sources of influence that are most crucial to understanding how others form their perceptions of the *nature* of influence of auxiliary staff. In contrast, sources of influence such as dependency, location, time, and position in the social structure may be more crucial to understanding how others form their perceptions of the *extent* of influence of auxiliary staff.

Personal Resources and Influence

That agents must have resources in order to exercise influence is an undergirding assumption reflected in the literature of influence. Traditionally, these resources were thought to be primarily economic in nature, but subsequent studies indicated that personal resources such as recognition, affection, prestige (Likert, 1961), expertise (Katz & Kahn, 1966), personal traits (Yukl, 1989), and other personal qualities (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995) also constitute the currency of influence. Results of this study suggest that when auxiliary staff possess interpersonal skills that enable them to influence others by according them recognition, affection, self-fulfillment, admiration, praise and respect, they can exercise symbolic influence which has a positive impact upon the school culture. And, through their expertise in performing numerous functions that are essential to the efficient operation of the school, auxiliary staff can exercise technical influence which also has a positive impact upon the school culture. But it would appear from results of this study that the lack of certain interpersonal skills or technical expertise may also constitute the currency of influence. For, even though in this study cafeteria staff saw themselves as having the personal resources to reinforce norms and values of the school in their interactions with students, the professional staff viewed them as lacking such resources and thus having a negative impact upon the school culture.

Summary

Results of this study suggest that the influence of auxiliary staff upon the school culture is both technical and symbolic and that this influence is exercised overtly (through

persuasion and manipulation of the physical or social environment) and tacitly (through dependency, location, time, and position in the social structure). It also appears that perceptions regarding the positive or negative nature of the influence of auxiliary staff upon the school culture may be derived primarily from the overt exercise of influence in which skill or ability in using persuasion or manipulating the physical or social environment influence are major factors. In contrast, perceptions of the extent of influence appear to be derived primarily from the tacit exercise of influence in which dependency, location, time, and position in the social structure are major factors.

It is interesting to note that while it does not appear to be perceived as a source of influence for cafeteria staff and custodians, position in the social structure does appear to be a source of influence for secretaries. Moreover, it appears that auxiliary staff tend to see themselves as being equally influential but teachers appear to perceive a distinct influence "pecking order" among the auxiliary staff with secretaries being viewed as the most influential group. These findings suggest that position in the social structure may be a significant factor in shaping teachers' perceptions of the extent of influence exercised by various groups. Also, it might be speculated that position in the social structure of the school may be a factor in explaining why auxiliary staff perceive their realm of influence to be limited primarily to students; that is, individuals whom they perceive as occupying a lower position than they do.

Results of this study also support previous findings which indicate that individuals often seek to become agents of influence because of their concern for the well-being of others (Casanova, 1991: Cordeiro et al., 1994; Fortenberry, 1991; Gilham, 1992; Harp, 1996). These results seem worthy of serious consideration in relation to Greenfield's (1991) contention that the purpose of the school should be to advance the welfare and interest of all children served by the school, and, therefore, constitute a moral commitment. The existence of such a moral commitment on the part of auxiliary staff, however, may go unrecognized by many members of the professional staff. This would seem to have major implications with respect to understanding the vital role which auxiliary staff could play in shaping a culture that

exemplifies a shared commitment to the fundamental purpose of schools.

Finally, although the results of this study cannot be claimed to be generalizable to other settings, they strongly suggest that the "voices" of auxiliary staff need not just to be heard but listened to and further examined in order to gain a fuller understanding of the nature and extent of the implications of the influence of auxiliary staff upon the "woof and warp of the fabric of day to day life in schools" (Blase, 1991).

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Table 1

Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Items	Pearson Correlation	Pre-Mean	Standard Deviation	Post-Mean	Standard Deviation
1 Cafeteria	0.468	2.043	1.106	2.478	1.274
2 Custodian	0.644	2.478	1.162	2.565	1.079
3 Patrons	0.510	3.521	0.947	3.304	0.974
4 Principal	0.711	4.521	0.730	4.260	0.864
5 Secretary	0.669	3.565	0.992	3.478	1.081
6 Teachers ind.	0.447	3.260	0.864	3.565	0.895
7 Teachers coll.	0.327	4.130	0.814	4.000	0.852

Table 2

Composite Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Responses to Each Item of the OCQ by Each Group of Respondents

	Classified Staff			Principals			Teachers		
Item	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
1. Cafeteria staff	10	2.700	0.948	2	2.500	0.707	47	2.148	0.859
2. Custodian	10	3.100	0.567	2	3.000	1.414	47	2.851	0.751
3. Patrons	10	3.000	0.942	2	3.000	1.414	47	3.808	0.741
4. Principal	10	4.400	0.516	2	4.000	0.000	47	4.680	0.515
5. Secretary	10	3.800	0.788	2	4.000	1.414	47	3.574	0.902
6. Teachers individually	10	3.900	0.737	2	4.500	0.707	47	3.723	0.925
7. Teachers collectively	10	4.300	0.823	2	4.500	0.707	47	4.213	0.805

Figure 1

Graphic Comparison of the Mean Scores for Each Item for Each Group of Respondents

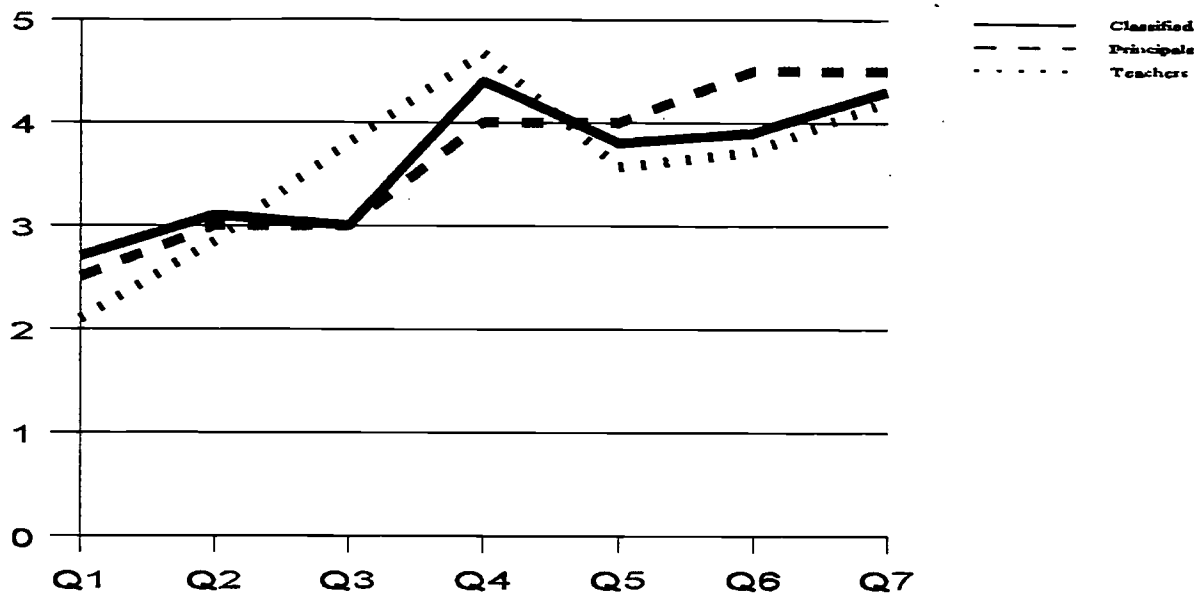

Table 3

Repeated Analysis of Variance of Item Ratings

Source	*df*	Type III *SS*	Mean Square	*F* value	*p* > *F*
		Between Subjects			
Role	2	0.011	0.053	0.04	0.962
Error	56	77.442	1.383		
		Within Subjects			
Item	6	45.857	7.643	14.91	0.000
Item x Role	12	12.969	1.081	2.11	0.016*
Error (Item)	336	172.227	0.513		

*$p \leq .05$.

Table 4

Sources of Differences in Responses to OCQ Items by Classified Staff

Item	*n*	*M*	*SD*	Mean Score Differences					
				Cafeteria Staff	Patrons	Custodian	Secretary	Teachers Indiv,	Teachers Coll.
Cafeteria staff	10	2.700	0.950						
Patrons	10	3.000	0.940	0.300					
Custodian	10	3.100	0.570	0.400	0.100				
Secretary	10	3.800	0.790	1.100	0.800	0.700			
Teachers indiv.	10	3.900	0.740	1.200	0.900	0.800	0.100		
Teachers coll.	10	4.300	0.820	1.600*	1.300	1.200	0.500	0.400	
Principal	10	4.400	0.520	1.700*	1.400*	1.300	0.600	0.500	0.100

Note. Critical value = 1.335 for $df = 336$.

*p ≤ .05.

Table 5

Sources of Differences in Responses to OCQ Items by Teachers

Item	*n*	*M*	*SD*	Mean Score Differences					
				Cafeteria Staff	Custodian	Secretary	Teachers Indiv.	Patrons	Teachers Coll.
Cafeteria staff	47	2.148	0.860						
Custodian	47	2.851	0.750	0.703*					
Secretary	47	3.574	0.900	1.426*	0.723*				
Teachers indiv.	47	3.723	0.930	1.575*	0.872*	0.149			
Patrons	47	3.808	0.740	1.660*	0.957*	0.234	0.085		
Teachers coll.	47	4.212	0.810	2.064*	1.361*	0.638*	0.489	0.404	
Principal	47	4.680	0.520	2.532*	1.829*	1.106*	0.957*	0.872*	0.468

Note. Critical value = 0.616 for $df = 336$.

*p ≤ .05.

Table 6

Sources of Differences in Responses to OCQ Items by Principals

Item	*n*	*M*	*SD*	Mean Score Differences					
				Cafeteria Staff	Custodian	Patrons	Principal	Secretary	Teachers Indiv.
Cafeteria staff	2	2.500	0.700						
Custodian	2	3.000	1.410	0.500					
Patrons	2	3.000	0.940	0.500	0.000				
Principal	2	4.000	0.000	1.500	1.000	1.000			
Secretary	2	4.000	1.410	1.500	1.000	1.000	0.000		
Teachers individually	2	4.500	0.700	2.000	1.500	1.500	0.500	0.500	
Teachers collectively	2	4.500	0.700	2.000	1.500	1.500	0.500	0.500	0.000

Note. Critical value = 2.986 for $df = 336$.

*$p \leq .05$.

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Organization/Address: Bowling Green State University, 517 Education Bldg., Bowling Green, Ohio 43403-0250	Telephone: 419-372-7377	FAX: 419-372-8265
	E-Mail Address: preed@bgnet.bgsu.edu	Date: 4/7/98

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